



दिव्य-भव्य-डिजिटल
एकता का महाकुम्भ

सनातन गर्व महाकुम्भ पर्व

Confluence of Art, Culture and Tradition

Mahakumbh 2025 Prayagraj

13 January to 26 February



Uttar Pradesh Museum Directorate, Lucknow

— Department of Culture, Uttar Pradesh —

Mahakumbh Prayagraj – 2025

Mahakumbh

The *Maha Kumbh Mela* is deeply embedded in *Hindu* mythology and represents one of the most significant gatherings of faith in the world. Rooted in the rich soils of Indian mythology and culture, the *Maha Kumbh Mela* is a profound representation of humanity's timeless quest for inner peace, self-realization, and spiritual unity. The *Kumbh Mela* is an event that intrinsically encapsulates the science of astronomy, astrology, spirituality, ritualistic traditions, and socio-cultural customs and practices, making it extremely rich in knowledge. This event is celebrated by a broad spectrum of pilgrims from the *Hindu* faith. Participants include ascetics, such as *Sadhus* and *Naga Sadhus*, who practice intense spiritual discipline, hermits who emerge from seclusion to join the *Mela*, seekers of spiritual wisdom, and everyday practitioners of Hinduism. This vast gathering embodies a unique convergence of faith, wisdom, and cultural heritage.

History of Kumbh

The tradition of organizing *Kumbh* is thousands of years old. While no authentic historical records from ancient times explicitly mention *Kumbh*, its image is deeply etched in the hearts of the country's religious people. This is why millions automatically gather for the festival. The *Kumbh* festival was not initiated with the intention of creating history, but its history was

established by the passage of time. Religious traditions, after all, rest on faith and belief, not solely on historical accounts. From a historical perspective, the oldest written description of Kumbh dates back to the time of Emperor Harshavardhan. Emperor Harsh himself participated in the Kumbh organized in Prayagraj, as described in the travelogue of the Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsang. It is also believed that the great philosopher Shankaracharya, in the 8th century A.D., gave a systematic form to the organization of Kumbh, shaping it into the grand event it is today.

Kumbh: An Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

- In 2017, UNESCO recognized *Kumbh* as an "Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity", highlighting the richness of Indian traditions.
- The core message of *Kumbh* is the welfare of humanity and the spirit of "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*" (the world is one family), symbolizing peace and harmony on the global stage.



Samudra Manthan and Kumbh



The literal meaning of "Kumbh" is "Kalash" (pot). In the context of Kumbh, "Kalash" refers to the *Amrit Kalash*, which was obtained during the *Samudra Manthan* (churning of the ocean). Indian scriptures provide a detailed account of the *Samudra Manthan*, which was performed by the gods (*Devas*) and demons (*Asuras*) to obtain *Amrit* (nectar of immortality).

For the Samudra Manthan:

The *Mandarachal* Mountain was used as the churning rod. *Vasuki Nag* served as the churning rope. To prevent the *Mandarachal* Mountain from sinking into the ocean, Lord *Vishnu* took the form of a tortoise (*Kurma avatar*) and supported the mountain on his back. The demons held *Vasuki's* head, while the gods held its tail, and together they churned the ocean.

Fourteen Gems Obtained from Samudra Manthan

The following fourteen treasures (ratnas) were obtained during the churning of the ocean:

लक्ष्मीः कौस्तुभ पारिजातक सुरा धन्वन्तरिश्चन्द्रमाः। गावः कामदुहा
सुरेश्वरगजो रम्भादिदेवांगनाः।

अश्वः सप्तमुखो विषं हरिधनुः शंखोमृतं चाम्बुधेः। रत्नानीह चतुर्दश प्रतिदिनं
कुर्यात्सदा मंगलम् ॥

- In summary, these treasures were: 1. Halahal (Kalkut poison) 2. Kamadhenu (wish-fulfilling cow) 3. Uchchaihshravas (divine horse) 4. Airavata (white elephant) 5. Kaustubha (divine gem) 6. Kalpavriksha (wish-fulfilling tree) 7. Apsara Rambha 8. Goddess Lakshmi (goddess of wealth and prosperity) 9. Varuni Devi (goddess of liquor) 10. Moon (Chandra) 11. Parijat (divine tree) 12. Panchajanya (divine conch) 13. Lord Dhanvantari (god of medicine) 14. Amrit (nectar of immortality), Lord Dhanvantari appeared holding the Amrit Kalash as the final treasure. Amrit symbolizes long life and immortality.

Effusion of Nectar Drops from the Amrit Kalash

- During the struggle between the gods and demons for possession of the *Amrit Kalash*, a few drops of nectar spilled at four locations: 1. Haridwar (Uttarakhand) 2. Prayagraj (Uttar Pradesh) 3. Ujjain (Madhya Pradesh) 4. Nashik (Maharashtra). As a result, the *Kumbh Mela* is organized at these sacred sites, commemorating this divine event.

Astronomical Importance of Kumbh

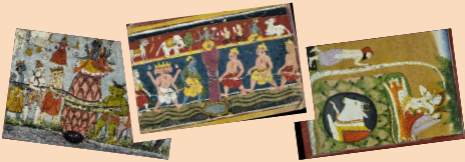
- The foundation of the *Kumbh* festival is not solely based on mythology but also on astronomy, as the special positions of the planets determine the timing and duration of the festival.
- *Kumbh* is a unique festival marked by a sacred alignment of days and planetary positions. The timing is based on the positions of the Sun, Moon, Jupiter, and Saturn. The festival is organized according to specific planetary alignments:
 - When Jupiter enters Aquarius and the Sun enters Aries, the *Kumbh* festival is held in Haridwar.
 - When Jupiter and the Sun enter Leo, the *Kumbh* festival is held in Nasik.
 - When Jupiter enters Leo and the Sun enters Aries, the *Kumbh* festival is held in Ujjain.
 - When Jupiter enters Aries and the Sun and Moon enter Capricorn, the *Kumbh* festival is held at the Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj.

Ardh Kumbh, Kumbh, and Maha Kumbh

- *Ardh Kumbh*: Held in Haridwar and Prayagraj every six years.
- *Kumbh*: Occurs four times every 12 years, rotating sequentially between:
 1. Haridwar on the banks of the Ganga River.
 2. Ujjain on the banks of the Shipra River.
 3. Nasik on the banks of the Godavari River.
 4. Prayagraj, at the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati rivers.
- *Maha Kumbh*: A rare grand event that takes place every 144 years.

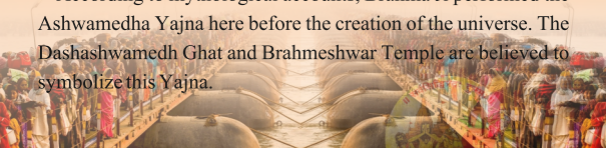
MahaKumbh in Prayagraj

Hearing the words "*Kumbh* in Prayagraj" immediately evokes the image of the sacred confluence of the *Ganga*, *Yamuna*, and *Saraswati* rivers. From the *Shahi Snan* of the *Shri Akharas* to the religious rituals and the chanting of *mantras* in the *pandals* of saints and sages, the entire *Kumbh* premises resonates with discourses and teachings focused on public welfare. Continuous cultural events and glimpses of traditions from across India and abroad are readily experienced during the *Kumbh* in Prayagraj.



Features

- The Kumbh of Prayagraj is the only Kumbh that upholds the tradition of Kalpavas. In the Matsya Purana, Maharishi Markandeya tells Yudhishtira that Prayag is specially protected by all the gods. By staying here for a month, observing complete abstinence, maintaining unbroken celibacy, and offering tarpan to one's deities and ancestors, all wishes are fulfilled.
- According to mythological accounts, Brahma Ji performed the Ashwamedha Yajna here before the creation of the universe. The Dashashwamedh Ghat and Brahmeshwar Temple are believed to symbolize this Yajna.



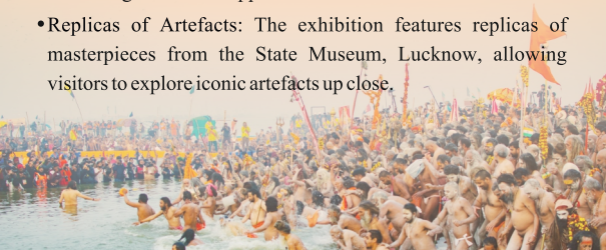
- The glory of the Kumbh in Prayagraj is elaborated in the Matsya Purana.
- The confluence of the three holy rivers-Ganga, Yamuna, & Saraswati-in Prayagraj is known as the Triveni.
- Due to its sanctity and significance, Prayagraj is also referred to as Tirtharaj.
- Along with its rivers, the "Triveni of knowledge" also flows here. For centuries, during the Maha Kumbh, the land of Prayagraj has been a thriving center for Indian culture through discussions, seminars, and discourses on various topics, including knowledge, spirituality, astrology and other oriental sciences.
- According to Prayag Mahatmya, Prayagraj has been a pre-eminent place of knowledge and devotion since time immemorial. On the banks of the Triveni in Prayag, there is a unique confluence of numerous sects, cultures, knowledge, renunciation and devotion.



Uttar Pradesh Museum Directorate, Lucknow

Highlights of the Exhibition

- **AR and VR (Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality):** These advanced technologies allow visitors to experience the historical and cultural aspects of the museum in a lifelike manner.
- **3D Scanned Images:** Visitors can view detailed and close-up images of ancient heritage items, providing an immersive experience.
- **Documentaries and Digital Signage:** Informative documentaries and signage share the stories of our museums and highlight the significance of historical heritage.
- **AI Mitra:** A robotic personal guide that assists visitors by providing guidance and answering their queries.
- **Augmented Reality App:** Transform your smartphone into a live museum experience with this innovative app.
- **LED Backlit Picture Displays:** This technology presents historical heritage and artefacts in an attractive and vibrant way, enhancing their visual appeal.
- **Replicas of Artefacts:** The exhibition features replicas of masterpieces from the State Museum, Lucknow, allowing visitors to explore iconic artefacts up close.



Main Bathing Dates

→ Paush Purnima, 13 January 2025

→ Makar Sankranti, 14 January 2025 (First Shahi Snan)

→ Mauni Amavasya, 29 January 2025 (Second Shahi Snan)

→ Basant Panchami, 03 February 2025 (Third Shahi Snan)

→ Maghi Purnima, 12 February 2025

→ Maha Shivaratri, 26 February 2025



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